

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAM-01 SAJ-01 DODE-00 SS-20 NSC-10 ACDA-19 OMB-01

IO-14 DRC-01 /157 W

----- 081172

R 011215Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 594

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 574

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, IO, UK, US

SUBJ: JOURNALISTS TOUR OF DIEGO GARCIA

REF: NEW DELHI 2701 AND 2631

1. OUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES HAVE JUST ASKED US IF WE WANT TO COORDINATE ON SENDING JOURNALISTS FROM CEYLON ON TOUR OF DIEGO GARCIA. SINCE WE HAVE RECEIVED NOTHING ON THIS, OTHER THAN EMBASSY NEW DELHI'S TWO REPORTS (REFTELS), WE ARE AT DISTINCT DISADVANTAGE IN REPLYING.

2. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW A TOUR SUCH AS WE GUESS IS CONTEMPLATED CAN DO NO GOOD HERE AND IS LIKELY TO BE UNHELPFUL. BECAUSE DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION PLANS ARE NOT IN ACCORD WITH CEYLONese VIEW OF THEIR FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS, NEWS STORIES GENERATED FROM DIEGO GARCIA WILL NOT ALLEVIATE ANY CONCERNS HERE BECAUSE THESE CONCERNS STEM FROM EXISTENCE OF "BASE" AT DIEGO GARCIA RATHER THAN FROM ANY PARTICULAR ASPECT OF OPERATIONS THERE. FURTHER, NEWS STORIES WILL BRING DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION BACK
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TO FOREFRONT, POSSIBLY GENERATING NEW OR GREATER PRESSURES

ON GSL TO CONDEMN PLANS PUBLICLY.

3. IF DESPITE VIEWS OF EMBASSIES NEW DELHI AND COLOMBO
WASHINGTON DECIDES TO SEND JOURNALISTS TO DIEGO GARCIA, WE
WOULD ASK, FIRST, TLPBE TOLD OFFICIALLY THAT TRIP IS BEING PLANNED,
SECOND, TO RECEIVE RATIONALE FOR VISIT AND, THIRD,
TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY CONSIDER WHETHER INCLUSION CEYLONENSE
JOURNLIST MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BE IN OUR INTEREST.
VAN HOLLEN

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NNN

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